

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 1764

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SP, US
SUBJECT: DIALOGUE WITH THE PSOE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: MADRID 390

1. WE HAVE BEEN CONCERNED BY THE LACK OF BALANCE IN THE APPROACH TO FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF SPAIN'S LARGEST SOCIALIST PARTY, THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL-RECOGNIZED PSOE. ACCORDINGLY, AT THE AMBASSADOR'S DIRECTION WE ARE CONDUCTING A DIALOGUE WITH PSOE LEADERS WHICH, COUPLED WITH THE CHANGE IN USG POLICY ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES, HAS CONTRIBUTED TO SOMEWHAT MORE PSOE ATTENTION TO THE IMPLICATIONS OF ITS FOREIGN POLICY DECLARATIONS, PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS THE SINS OF THE SOVIET UNION AND EAST EUROPEAN REGIMES. BELOW WE SUMMARIZE CERTAIN RECENT PSOE STATEMENTS AND EXCHANGES WE HAVE HAD WITH PARTY LEADERS ABOUT THEM.

2. DURING HIS REMARKS TO THE JANUARY MEETING OF THE WORLD PEACE COUNCIL IN MOSCOW (REFTEL), PSOE INTERNATPAL SECRETARY LUIS YANEZ BY ALL ACCOUNTS SCANDALIZED THE COUNCIL AUDIENCE AND HIS HOSTS WHEN HE CRITICIZED THE SOVIET UNION FOR BEING AMONG THOSE COUNTRIES HOLDING POLITICAL PRISONERS. YANEZ' REMARKS WERE ELICITED IN PART, WE

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JUDGE, BY OUR EARLIER REPRESENTATIONS TO HIM CONCERNING A LACK OF BALANCE IN PSOE STATEMENTS ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS. HOWEVER, YANEZ MADE NO MENTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA OR OTHER EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, AND HE EVEN LUMPED THE US IN THE SAME CATEGORY AS THE SOVIET UNION, CHARGING THAT "ALLEGED" PUERTO RICAN TERRORISTS INCARCERATED IN THE US REALLY ARE POLITICAL PRISONERS. ALONG SIMILAR LINES,

PSOE SECGEN FELIPE GONZALEZ, AFTER MEETING A WHILE BACK WITH A MEMBER OF A PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE GROUP, MADE A PUBLIC STATEMENT CRITICAL OF US POLICY TOWARD THE ISLAND AND SUPPORTIVE OF PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE.

3. THE AMBASSADOR AND EMBOFFS HAVE RAISED INACCURACIES AND DISTORTIONS IN SUCH STATEMENTS DURING RECENT CONVERSATIONS, MOST RECENTLY WITH REGARD TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA, WHERE THE PSOE HAS LAGGED BEHIND NOT ONLY ITS WESTERN EUROPEAN SOCIALIST BROTHERS BUT ALSO THE EUROCOMMUNIST PARTIES, INCLUDING THE PCE. EMBOFF DISCUSSED THE CZECH SITUATION WITH YANEZ, EMPHASIZING THE DESIRABILITY OF THE PSOE'S ADDING ITS VOICE TO THOSE SPEAKING OUT ON THE CHARTER 77 AFFAIR. YANEZ RESPONDED THAT THE PSOE WOULD DO SO, AND EXPRESSED SKEPTICISM ABOUT USG INTENTIONS IN MAKING SOVIET/EAST EUROPEAN HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS SUCH AN ISSUE. EMBOFF RESPONDED AT THE TIME THAT THE USG WAS TAKING AN EVEN-HANDED STANCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS, AND MORE RECENTLY YANEZ HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY COMPLIMENTARY, AND MUCH LESS SKEPTICAL, OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S STANCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

4. AS YANEZ PROMISED, THE PSOE HAS NOW SPOKEN OUT ON THE SOVIET BLOC HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION. IN AN INTERVIEW ON THE EVE OF THE RECENT EUROCOMMUNIST /SUMMIT" PUBLISHED IN A WIDELY READ MADRID WEEKLY MAGAZINE, LA ACTUALIDAD ESPANOLA, PSOE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER ENRIQUE MUGICA STATED, INTER ALIA, THAT: -- THE CHARTER 77 AFFAIR DEMONSTRATES THAT "THE PANZER-COMMUNISM IS NOT ONLY A LAMENTABLE PAST BUT AN OPPRESSIVE PRESENT WHICH SPARKS THE RESISTANCE OF AUTHENTIC MEN OF THE LEFT;"

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-- THE EXISTENCE OF THESE NUCLEI OF DISSIDENTS IS A SYMPTOM OF THE GRAVE INFIRMITY WHICH GRIPS A TOTALITARIANISM WHICH CANNOT SUPPORT THE SLIGHTEST DISAGREEMENT; AND -- "I REMIND YOU THAT HIGH-SOUNDING PHRASES ABOUT THE PERMANENT PLURALISM OF REGIMES IN WHICH THE COMMUNIST PARTY HAS ACHIEVED HEGEMONY WERE FIRST PRONOUNCED BY THE COMMUNIST LEADERS OF THESE VERY SAME EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES IN 1945-1947."

5. AS FOR CHARGES THAT THE US HOLDS POLITICAL PRISONERS, EMBOFF POINTED OUT THAT THOSE PUERTO RICANS JAIL-ED IN THE US FOR TERRORIST ACTS HAD RECEIVED FAIR TRIALS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING THE ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IN THE EARLY 1950'S, WERE VERY MUCH A PART OF THE PUBLIC RECORD. YANEZ WAS SURPRISED AT THIS, RESPONDING THAT HE HAD

UNDERSTOOD THAT THE PUERTO RICANS HAD BEEN JAILED FOR RELATIVELY TRIVIAL OFFENSES. HE DID NOT KNOW OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES EPISODE.

6. CONCERNING PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE, EMBOFF EXPLAINED THAT IT WAS USG POLICY TO LEAVE THE DECISION ON PUERTO RICO'S STATUS VIS-A-VIS THE US UP TO THE PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE, A POLICY WHICH PRESIDENT CARTER RECENTLY REAFFIRMED. MOREOVER, IN THE LAST ELECTION, INDEPENDENCE BACKERS RECEIVED ONLY ABOUT 5 PERCENT OF THE VOTE. AGAIN, YANEZ WAS VISIBLY SURPRISED, PARTICULARLY BY THE LOW LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR THE INDEPENDENCE OPTION.

7. WE PLAN TO CONTINUE THIS DIALOGUE, RECOGNIZING THAT THE PARTY LEADERS' LACK OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE AND THE LEFTIST POLITICAL SUBCULTURE IN WHICH THEY CIRCULATE WILL MAKE IT A SLOW PROCESS AT BEST. IN THIS
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CONNECTION, THE MATERIAL ON PUERTO RICO REQUESTED IN USIS 1699 WOULD BE HELPFUL. EATON

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Message Attributes

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